

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 09920 221816Z

60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAB-01 IO-13 ACDA-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 /099 W

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R 221445Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5467

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T CAIRO 9920

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR, XF

SUBJECT: SOVIET INTEREST IN MIDDLE EAST CURRENT EVENTS

1. SOVIET FIRST SECRETARY KOLESNIKOV CALLED ON EMBOFF
JULY 22. REFERRING CONSTANTLY TO TWO PAGES OF HANDWRITTEN
NOTES, HE RAISED THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

A. SADAT JULY 23 SPEECH. INSISTING USG HAD KNOWN OF SADAT'S
ANNOUNCEMENT OF ABROGATION USSR/GOE FRIENDSHIP TREATY ONE
WEEK IN ADVANCE, HE ASKED FOR ADVANCE INFORMATION ON SADAT'S
SPEECH TONIGHT. HE ADMITTED THAT SOVIETS, AS USUAL, ARE WORRED
THAT SADAT'S ANTI-MOSCOW PHOBIA WILL GET THE BEST OF HIM
YET AGAIN. EMBOFF DENIED PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF CONTENT ANY SADAT SPEECH.

B. SAUDI/SUDANESE/EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. STRESSING USSR'S
GOOD RELATIONS WITH SUDAN, KOLESNIKOV INSISTED ABORTED
COUP WAS INTERNAL UPRISING WITH NO ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE.
GIVEN THIS PREMISE, WHICH EMBOFF EMPHATICALLY REFUSED TO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 09920 221816Z

ACCEPT, HE WONDERED WHY SAUDIS HAVE ENTERED INTO "ALLIANCE"

WITH KHARTOUM AND CAIRO. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT EGYPTIANS CLEARLY BELIEVE LIBYANS WERE INVOLVED. KOLESNIKOV INTERRUPTED, IMPLICITLY ADMITTING LIBYANS HAD HAND IN COUP EFFORT, TO EXPRESS PUZZLEMENT AS TO WHY LIBYA HAD NOT BEEN MENTIONED IN SAUDI/SUDANESE/EGYPTIAN COMMUNIQUE. WHAT ARE SAUDI MILITARY OBLIGATIONS TO SUDAN, HE ASKED. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT SAUDIS ARE CLEARLY INTERESTED IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR KHARTOUM, BUT SAID ANY SAUDI MILITARY OBLIGATION IS NOT YET CLEAR. KOLESNIKOV INSISTED ON IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNIQUE'S AVOIDANCE OF EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO LIBYA AND SAID HIS EMBASSY IS PUZZLED BY THIS OMISSION. EMBOFF NOTED SAUDI STYLE USUALLY PRECLUDES RHETORICAL ASSESSMENTS OF BLAME IN ARAB WORLD.

C. LEBANON. KOLESNIKOV CONFIRMED THAT SOVIETS HAD GIVEN DRESSING DOWN TO KHADDAM IN MOSCOW RE SYRIAN INTERVENTION, BUT THAT KHADDEM HAD NOT BEEN RECEPTIVE. KOLESNIKOV LAMENTED ARAB DISUNITY OVER LEBANON IS HOLDING BACK PEACE PROCESS.

D. SINAI III. KOLESNIKOV ANNOUNCED THAT EGYPT WOULD BE PREPARED GO IT ALONE WITH A SINAI III AGREEMENT. EMBOFF SAID THIS IS NOT OUR UNDERSTANDING AND ASKED WHY SADAT WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE SUCH A GREAT POLITICAL RISK FOR SUCH SMALL RETURN. KOLESNIKOV DID NOT OFFER COHERENT REPLY, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT SUCH STEP WOULD CEMENT US POSITION AS EGYPT'S BEST FRIEND, A PRIME SADAT GOAL.

3. GENEVA. OTHER THAN LEBANON, PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA REMAINS TOP OBSTACLE TO PEACE SETTLEMENT, KOLESNIKOV VOLUNTEERED. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION OF IRRECONCILABLE US AND SOVIET POLICIES ON THIS ISSUE, KOLESNIKOV ASKED EMBOFF IF USG WOULD ACCEPT NITION OF PLO PRESENCE, NOT ON EQUAL FOOTING, BUT AS "OBSERVERS". EMBOFF RESPONDED THIS SEEMED NEW IDEA, NOTING THAT THERE IS NO PROVISION FOR OBSERVERS IN CURRENT GENEVA STRUCTURE.

F. USSR/GOE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS. EMBOFF ASKED IF SENIOR SOVIET GOVERNMENT TRADE OFFICIAL IS STILL EXPECTED VISIT CAIRO NEXT SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER TO NEGOTIATE LONG TERM TRADE AGREEMENT. (COMMENT: WE HAD PREVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WAS THE CASE--CAIRO 5811). KOLESNIKOV SAID NO VISIT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 CAIRO 09920 221816Z

IS EXPECTED. EMBOFF EXPRESSED SURPRISE, GIVEN PRESS REPORTS OF LAST APRIL. KOLESNIKOV, IN REMARKS REMINISCENT OF GDR AMBASSADOR'S RECENT COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR EILTS (CAIRO 9682), DISCUSSED DIGNITY OF SUPER POWER. USSR WILL NOT MAKE FIRST MOVE. ALTHOUGH NEW EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN TOLD TO "OPEN NEGOTIATIONS" CONCERNING PROPOSED VISIT, HE HAS NOT YET DONE SO. SOVIETS WILL NOT ASK FOR AN INVITATION.

G. EGYPTIAN ELECTIONS. PRESSED HARD BY EMBOFF FOR HIS VIEWS ON CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND PROSPECTS OF LEFTIST CANDIDATES, KOLESNIKOV AVOIDED ALL COMMENT EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THE ECONOMY IS THE NUMBER ONE ISSUE.

2. COMMENT. KOLESNIKOV APPARENTLY CAME OVER TO FISH FOR INFORMATION ABOUT ANY EGYPTIAN/SAUDI MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS TO PROTECT SUDAN. HE RETURNED TO SUBJECT AGAIN AND AGAIN IN 90 MINUTE DISCUSSION. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO JUDGE WHETHER HIS APPARENTLY OFFHAND REMARK ABOUT ALLOWING PLO INTO GENEVA AS OBSERVER WAS HIS OWN IDEA OR NOT. GIVEN HIS CAUTION IN TALKING TO US, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SUCH AN IDEA HAS AT LEAST BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN CAIRO. ON OTHER HAND, GIVEN HIS IMPULSIVE AND BUMBILING NATURE, KOLESNIKOV MAY HAVE DECIDED TO TRY OUT THIS IDEA ON HIS OWN. EILTS

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